



DATE: June 24, 2019

AGENDA ITEM # 4

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Historical Commission

FROM: Sean Gallegos, Staff Liaison

SUBJECT: H-19-0001 – 51 South San Antonio Road

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of exterior alterations to a Historic Resource property subject to the listed findings

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is an application for alterations to a designated historic resource property at 51 South San Antonio Road. The scope of work includes exterior alterations to the front, sides, and rear of the structure, including repair of the tank platform, and the demolition of non-historic attached additions along the right (east) side and left (west) side.

BACKGROUND

The 1915 folk-Victorian architecture is unchanged, except for exterior shingle siding added in 1993 and seismic/strength reinforcement required in its relocation in 1993. The tank house embodies the distinctive characteristics of its function and period. Originally covered with shiplap siding, when restored in 1993 redwood shingles were used as the outer siding, which ties its finish treatment to the adjacent historic landmark, the 1905 J. Gilbert Smith House. The door and windows, the tank itself, and bead board sections, are original. Much of the trim pieces on the tank level and the latticework came with the tank house; while they may (or may not) be additions since 1915, they were made during its working life at its original site.

The water tower is exhibiting physical deterioration, including the addition of shingle siding inconsistent with the original structure. Although some of the tank house exterior has been altered by the addition of shingle siding, the addition of the attached structures and physical deterioration; the building has obvious visual integrity with its vernacular of the 1915 folk-Victorian architecture for a tank house design. Its original shiplap siding beneath the existing shingle siding, hipped roof form, and underlying structure are intact and represent the era's workmanship and use of materials. Its original character-defining materials have been preserved, including its roof form, tank platform and cantilevered deck joists, redwood doors, and wood single-hung windows.

The tank house continues to embody feelings of a rural twentieth-century family farm and continues to illustrate the property's association with the pattern of early Los Altos development. The physical environment of the historic property, a working orchard, is no longer original, as that property is now the site of senior housing. However, the look and feel of a historic setting has been duplicated with its adjacency to the J. Gilbert Smith house.

DISCUSSION

Heather Farquhar with Los Altos History Museum and Mark Sandoval, A.I.A. reviewed the project to ensure consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Structures, with the report included as Attachment C. As indicated in the report, the tank house exhibits considerable physical deterioration due to water penetration from the tank platform and roof, but it continues to reflect an example of a tank house built in the early 20th century. The preservation includes maintaining the roof form, repairing and/or replacing (as needed) the tank platform, removing the redwood shingle siding to expose the original shiplap siding, the repair and replacement (as needed) of the shiplap siding, and the repair and replacement (as needed) of trim details.

The project will also include the removal of two small attached structures along the right and left sides of the tank house. The removal of the non-historic attached structures does not violate the Secretary of the Interior's standards for Rehabilitation.

As indicated in the project plans and Secretary of the Interior's Standards Report, no historic massing of the tank house is proposed for removal, and the exterior form and footprint will be preserved. The features and finishes that characterize the tank house are generally proposed for preservation or restoration consistent with the proposed drawings. The project plan elevations indicate original materials will be repaired and replaced as possible.

As outlined in the report from Heather Farquhar and Mark Sandoval, A.I.A., the proposed alterations do not adversely affect the physical integrity or the historic significance of the property and are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

In order to make a positive advisory recommendation, the Commission will need to find that the project is consistent with the provisions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and does not adversely affect the physical integrity or the historic significance of the property. Once the Commission provides a recommendation, the project will be reviewed at an administrative level by staff.

Cc: Association of the Los Altos History Museum, Applicant
M. Sandoval Architects Inc., Architects
City of Los Altos, Owner

Attachments

- A. Application
- B. Secretary of the Interior's Standards Review Report, Urban Programmers
- C. Historic Property Evaluation – 51 South San Antonio Road

FINDINGS

H-19-0001 – 51 South San Antonio Road

With regard to the Advisory Review, the Historical Commission finds the following in accordance with Section 12.44.140 of the Municipal Code:

1. The project complies with all provisions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 12.44); and
2. The project does not adversely affect the physical integrity or the historic significance of the subject property.



ATTACHMENT A

CITY OF LOS ALTOS GENERAL APPLICATION

Type of Review Requested: (Check all boxes that apply)

Permit # HR19-0001

<input type="checkbox"/>	One-Story Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Commercial/Multi-Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Review
<input type="checkbox"/>	Two-Story Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rezoning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Variance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	R1-S Overlay
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lot Line Adjustment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tenant Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	General Plan/Code Amendment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tentative Map/Division of Land	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sidewalk Display Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appeal
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Historical Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Preliminary Project Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

Project Address/Location: 51 SOUTH SAN ANTONIO RD

Project Proposal/Use: HISTORIC Current Use of Property: HISTORIC

Assessor Parcel Number(s): _____ Site Area: _____

New Sq. Ft.: 0 Altered/Rebuilt Sq. Ft.: _____ Existing Sq. Ft. to Remain: _____

Total Existing Sq. Ft.: _____ Total Proposed Sq. Ft. (including basement): _____

Is the site fully accessible for City Staff inspection? YES

Applicant's Name: ASSOCIATION OF THE LOS ALTOS HISTORY MUSEUM

Telephone No.: 650-948-9427 Email Address: eward@localtoshistory.org

Mailing Address: 51 S. SAN ANTONIO RD

City/State/Zip Code: LOS ALTOS, CA 94022

Property Owner's Name: CITY OF LOS ALTOS

Telephone No.: _____ Email Address: _____

Mailing Address: 1 S. SAN ANTONIO RD

City/State/Zip Code: LOS ALTOS, CA 94022

Architect/Designer's Name: M. SANDOVAL ARCHITECTS

Telephone No.: 650-941-8048 Email Address: MSA@msandovalarchitects.com

Mailing Address: 145 CORTE MADERA TOWN CENTER #404

City/State/Zip Code: CORTE MADERA, CA 94925

* If your project includes complete or partial demolition of an existing residence or commercial building, a demolition permit must be issued and finalized prior to obtaining your building permit. Please contact the Building Division for a demolition package. *

ATTACHMENT B



Secretary of the Interior's Standards Review Proposed repair and restoration work for the Spagnoli Tank House located on the grounds of the Los Altos History Museum.

51 South San Antonio Road
Los Altos, California 94022
www.LosAltosHistory.org
650.948.9427

Spagnoli Tank House
51 S. San Antonio Road
Los Altos, CA 94022

*History inspires imagination,
stimulates thought and transforms
society. The Los Altos History
Museum preserves and shares
our local history to enrich our
community and to shape a
more informed future.*

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Sam Scott, Guest Exhibition Manager
Gena Hunter, Bookkeeper
Andrea Dompe, Collections & Exhibitions Intern
Faustino Carillo, Gardener

The Los Altos History Museum's legal name is the Association of the Los Altos Historical Museum; tax i.d. number 94-2542813.



Prepared by:

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51 S. San Antonio Rd.
Los Altos, CA 94022
650-948-9427
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June 17, 2019

INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

The proposed repairs to and restoration of the 1915 Spagnoli Tank House meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties – Preservation and Restoration Standards. The proposed repairs are compatible with the Standards for Preservation and the proposed removal of the existing wood shingle exterior are compatible with the Standards for Restoration. The following report outlines the details leading to this conclusion.

Report Intent

M. Sandoval Architects, Inc. was retained by the Association of the Los Altos History Museum to create exterior elevations, plans, details and site plan for the repair and restoration of the Spagnoli Tank House that were compatible with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation and Restoration (Standards). The Spagnoli Tank House is located within the Los Altos History Museum complex inside of the Civic Park. The Standards are a set of guidelines, created by the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, used to review historic buildings to determine the possible impact of a proposed project on a listed resource.

Review Methodology

For this report, Mark Sandoval, A.I.A. and Heather Farquhar, Deputy Director at the Los Altos History Museum referred to the August 2015 State of California historic property recordation forms (DPR523) prepared by former Executive Director of the Los Altos History Museum, Laura Bajuk and to archival documents within the Los Altos History Museum archives. Mr. Sandoval and Ms. Farquhar met at the location to discuss water intrusion issues, observe existing conditions, explore modifications made to the structure and create a project scope. Then they reviewed historical documents relating to the Spagnoli Tank House's original location/condition, move and installation in its current location within the Civic Park (51 S. San Antonio Rd, Los Altos, CA) and exterior modifications made following the move. Mr. Sandoval then created a scope of work, elevations, details and site plan for the work necessary to conduct repairs and restore the historical integrity based on the Standards.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Character of the Existing Resource

The Spagnoli Tank House is listed on the Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory as an example of Context 2: Agriculture 1850-1940. According to the context statement, the "orchards in the valley are the emphasis" of this context and smaller properties, that existed into the 1940s, "provide significant examples of architectural styles" used in their operation. The Tank House, built just a few years after the establishment of Los Altos, is

an example of architecture that played a critical role in the day to day operation of such orchards.

Per the DPR523 form from 2015, the Spagnoli Tank House was described as follows:

Built in 1915, this tank house served the Spagnoli family's orchard and home near Pine Lane. In 1993, the owners at that time, Pilgrim Haven (now the Terraces), were going to demolish it in order to develop the land for senior housing. Members of the community elected to save it and the Association of the Los Altos Historical Museum raised over \$40,000 to do so, led by Marion & Bob Grimm. On May 12, 1993 – the day after its approval/acceptance by City Council - it was moved and restored at the Los Altos History Museum. Originally covered with plank siding, when restored in 1993 redwood shingles were used as the outer siding, which ties it to the finish treatment of the adjacent historic landmark, the 1905 J. Gilbert Smith House. The door and windows, the tank itself, and bead board sections, are original. Much of the trim pieces on the tank level and the lattice work came with the tank house; while they may (or may not) be additions since 1915, they were made during its working life at its original site.

The Tank House represents one of the few remaining of its kind. It is a typical water tower for the region and possess the distinct characteristics of its function and period. It retains almost all of its historical integrity. It's design is unchanged since built in 1915. The original plank siding still exists under the redwood shingles and the overall workmanship and feeling of the period are still clearly stated.

Summary of the Proposed Project

The current project includes the repair of the tank platform, removal of two small structures, removal of wood shingles and repair of original exterior. In recent year significant leaking, that originates on the platform the original water tank sits on, has threatened the structural integrity of the building. The current project involves removal of the roof over the water tank and the water tank itself to allow necessary repairs to the platform that will eliminate this water intrusion. The water tank and its roof will also be evaluated for maintenance needs and repaired/restored following the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Historic Preservation. This project will also include the removal of two small structures attached to the right and left sides of the tank house. These structures currently shelter agriculture equipment from the collection of the City of Los Altos, in the care of the Association of the Los Altos Historical Museum, and are not part of the original tank house structure. These were added in 1993 when the Tank House was relocated to the History Museum grounds. New shelters for the agricultural equipment are planned, but considered a separate project and will be completed following the repairs to and restoration of the Spagnoli Tank House. The project also included the restoration of the exterior of the Tank House to its original appearance. The original appearance is documented in photographs taken prior to its relocation to the History Museum grounds and during the relocation/installation activities. Restoration will involve removing the redwood shingles that were applied over the original plank siding, repairing any damage and returning some minor features to their pre-shingle

appearance. All work will be done according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation.

SECRETARY'S STANDARD'S REVIEW

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Restoration* (Standards), originally published in 1977 and revised in 1990, include ten standards that present a recommended approach to repair, while preserving those portions or features that convey a resource's historical, cultural, or architectural values. Accordingly, Standards states that, "Restoration is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period".

Following is a summary of the review with a list of the Standards and associated analysis for this project:

- 1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that interprets the property and its restoration period.**

Analysis: The Spagnoli Tank House will be used to interpret the use of tank houses and waterways in the early 20th Century. Following its restoration, new outdoor signage will interpret the role tank houses played in orchards and the way they utilized water. Interpretation and education of the public will take place through 3rd and 4th grade school tours and additional tours for the public.

- 2. Materials and features from the restoration period will be retained and preserved. The removal of materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize the period will not be undertaken.**

Analysis: The goal of the project is to remove additions and small changes made to the Spagnoli Tank House when it was relocated to the History Museum grounds in 1993 and restore its original appearance. The redwood shingle added will be removed to expose the original plank siding underneath. Other small modifications to corners, windows and doors will be reversed to restore its original appearance based on photographs taken prior to and during the move process.

- 3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Work needed to stabilize, consolidate and conserve materials and features from the restoration period will be physically and visually compatible, identifiable upon close inspection and properly documented for future research.**

Analysis: The goal of this project is to restore the Spagnoli Tank House to its 1915 appearance, when it was originally built. The History Museum will be working closely with Mark Sandoval Architects, Inc. and D.C. Construction to ensure that original materials and features are retained where ever possible and that any new materials necessary are compatible, both physically and visually, with them. The entire process will be documented for future research and resulting material stored in the archive of the Los Altos History Museum.

- 4. Materials, features, spaces and finishes that characterize other historical periods will be documented prior to their alteration or removal.**

Analysis: All materials, features, spaces and finishes that characterize other historical periods will be documented prior to their alteration or removal by one or all of the following: The Los Altos History Museum; Mark Sandoval Architects, Inc.; D.C. Construction. Copies of all materials will be stored in the archives at the Los Altos History Museum.

- 5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the restoration period will be preserved.**

Analysis: All distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the restoration period will be preserved. The goal of the project is to restore these original items for public viewing. Where previous alterations were made that make it impossible to restore original features, necessary steps will be taken to replace those features with compatible and similar materials that meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation.

- 6. Deteriorated features from the restoration period will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials.**

Analysis: The goal of all involved in the project is to repair rather than replace. Materials will be replaced only in the event that they are damage beyond repair and all steps will be taken to ensure that replacement materials meet the above requirements. All parties involved in this project are experienced in historic preservation work and understand the importance of this standard.

- 7. Replacement of missing features from the restoration period will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence. A false sense of history will not be created by adding conjectural features, features from other properties, or by combining features that never existed together historically.**

Analysis: The goal of this project is to remove features, such as those mentioned above, from the structure and restore it to its built appearance from 1915 based on documentation that exists in the Los Altos History Museum archive.

- 8. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.**

Analysis: All parties involved in this project are experienced in historic preservation work and will take the utmost care not to use any treatments that might cause damage to historic materials.

- 9. Archeological resources affected by a project will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.**

Analysis: Although we do not anticipate any archeological resources being affected by this project, all appropriate measures will be taken in the event they are discovered.

- 10. Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.**

Analysis: The goal of this project is to remove some such features from the current appearance of the Spagnoli Tank House. When relocated to the History Museum grounds, two lean-to style structures were added to the right and left side of it. These are to be removed as is redwood shingle that was added at the same time. The goal is to restore the Tank House to its historically constructed appearance.

Conclusion

The proposed project for the Spagnoli Tank House, located on the grounds of the Los Altos History Museum, meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Restoration. The project will strengthen the historical integrity of the building by restoring it to its 1915 built construction. This will be accomplished by removing structures and features added in 1993; exposing and restoring original built features that lie underneath and securing the structure from further and future water intrusion issues.

Image of Original Construction



**Los Altos History Museum Tank House
in its original location 323 Pine Lane, Los Altos**

State of California X The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION	Primary # HRI#	<h2 style="margin: 0;">BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD</h2>
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* Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 51 S. San Antonio Road * NRHP Status Code _____
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B1. Historic Name: Spagnoli Tank House

B2. Common Name: 1915 Tank House, at the Los Altos History Museum

B3. Original Use: water tank and tank house **B4. Present Use:** education/history museum

* **B5. Architectural Style:** unknown (agricultural outbuilding typical of the late 19th-early 20th c.)

* **B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Built in 1915, this tank house served the Spagnoli family's orchard and home near Pine Lane. In 1993, the owners at that time, Pilgrim Haven (now the Terraces), were going to demolish it in order to develop the land for senior housing. Members of the community elected to save it and the Association of the Los Altos Historical Museum raised over \$40,000 to do so, led by Marion & Bob Grimm. On May 12, 1993 - the day after its approval/acceptance by City Council - it was moved and restored at the Los Altos History Museum. Furnished as if a migrant farm worker was living in it, it has been used to teach local history ever since.

* **B7. Moved?** No Yes Unknown **Date:** May 12, 1993 **Original Location:** Pine Lane & Los Altos Avenue

* **B8. Related Features:**

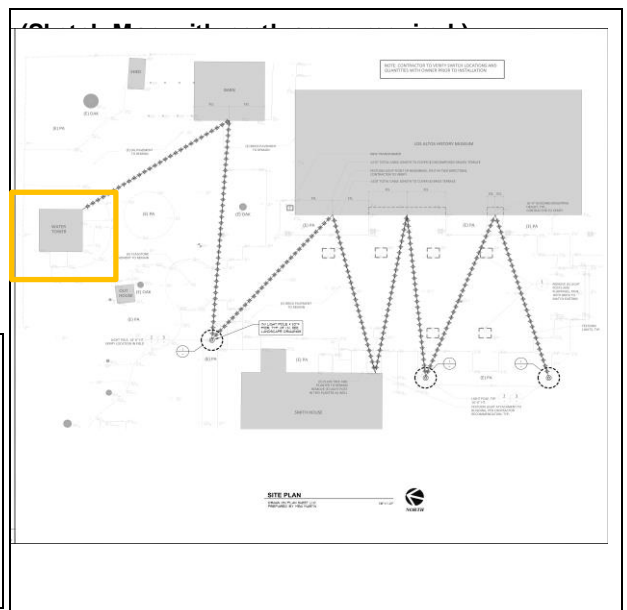
B9a. Architect: unknown **b. Builder:** unknown

* **B10. Significance:** Theme orchard outbuilding Area _____
 Period of Significance 1915-1950s (?) Property Type orchard Applicable Criteria _____
 (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

Very few century-old tank houses remain in the county, and even fewer are publicly accessible. After its useful life nearby at the Spagnoli family farm near Pine Lane, it deteriorated. In 1993, it was fully restored when it was moved to the Museum site; dry rot and other conditions were corrected. The City of Los Altos required its restoration to be sturdy enough that the tank *could* be filled with water.

Originally covered with plank siding, when restored in 1993 redwood shingles were used as the outer siding, which ties it to the finish treatment of the adjacent historic landmark, the 1905 J. Gilbert Smith House. The door and windows, the tank itself, and bead board sections, are original. Much of the trim pieces on the tank level and the lattice work came with the tank house; while they may (or may not)

(This space reserved for official comments.)



BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

* Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 51 S. San Antonio Road * NRHP Status Code _____
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be additions since 1915, they were made during its working life at its original site.

Historic Significance. Representing the last of its once-numerous kind, the 1915 Spagnoli tank house teaches our community about its past, and how that past has created the place we enjoy today. It is a centerpiece of the Museum's annual school tours for 3rd and 4th graders.

1. Event: Agriculture remains California's largest business, yet our local story--and world prominence--is today only a shadow on the edges of a high-tech, suburban society. Thanks to the Southern Pacific Railroad, which helped fruit farmers settle and develop the west, Santa Clara Valley was the top food producer in the world in the early 1900s, and was connected globally to markets by SP's international shipping network.

2. Person/People: The Spagnoli family does not reach a level of prominence; rather they are typical of 19th c. immigrants who left starvation, poverty and war behind and started a new life in a fertile new country. They were at best working class... but the abundance they found in America, like good food, public education and regular work, gave them a platform from the next generations would build a new life.

3. Architecture/Design: A typical 19th c. water tower of the region, it embodies the distinctive characteristics of its function and period.

Determination of Integrity. The tank house structure retains nearly all its historic integrity:

1. Design is unchanged since 1915, except for exterior shingle siding added in 1993 and seismic/strength reinforcement required in its relocation in 1993.

2. Setting: The physical environment of the historic property, a working orchard, is no longer original, as that property is now the site of high-density senior housing. BUT the look and feel of a historic setting has been duplicated at the Museum. Additionally, it is available to the public and is used to teach about our agricultural past, which is a huge improvement over it being abandoned (and perhaps a nuisance) on private property.

3. Materials are either original or have been replaced in-kind to correct dry rot, etc. Exception: because the City of Los Altos required higher level engineering to support a full water tank than it was originally constructed for when it was moved here in 1993, the interior is sheathed in plywood. No such engineering is visible from the outside.

4. Workmanship: Its folk-Victorian architecture is still very visible; this was a home-made structure, nothing fancy. That spirit remains true today.

5. Feeling: While obviously cared for, the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time is well-communicated by the tank house. It is a century-old building that has never been modernized, and indeed was restored to its agricultural function (minus a full tank of water, of course) and has been placed in a setting which educates about local agricultural practices in the 19th c.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) _____

* **B12. References:** Los Altos History Museum - Archives

B13. Remarks:

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

* Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 51 S. San Antonio Road * NRHP Status Code _____

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* B14. Evaluator: Laura Bajuk, E.D., Los Altos History Museum

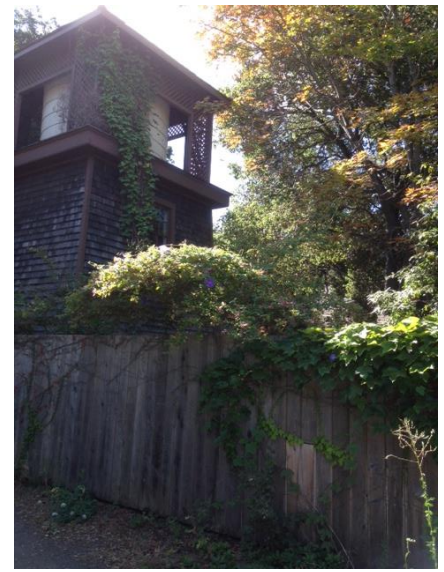
* Date of Evaluation: August 19, 2015



Front view



Back view (by LA Police Dept.)



Side view (facing the main library)



Side view (facing softball field) - note historic Formway "Wizard" walnut huller in foreground used for education programs. These were manufactured in Los Altos and made harvesting walnuts much easier and faster.
(Ladder was in place temporarily while feral beehive was removed so that repairs can be made to the structure, 8/13/15.)